



MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

BULLETIN NO: 03/02

DATE: April 2, 2002

SUBJECT: COAL-LIGHTERING IN LONG ISLAND SOUND

This bulletin serves as a notice to all vessel owners, operators, and agents of foreign vessels intending to lighter-coal in Long Island Sound. While coal-lightering operations do not require any special permits, there are some issues that should be addressed prior to the commencement of any lightering operations in Long Island Sound. These issues include:

1. The Bridgeport Lightering Zone, described in Long Island Sound Policy Letter (03/99): Lightering Zones, shall be used for all lightering operations where the coal is bound for Bridgeport Harbor. This policy letter (Enclosure (1)) was originally written for the lightering of petroleum products. Sections that do not apply to the proposed operations have been lined out.
2. A notice of lightering shall be submitted to this office not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the planned commencement of any lightering operation in COTP Long Island Sound Zone. This notice is in addition to the ninety-six (96) hour advance notice of arrival that the vessel must submit to the National Vessel Movement Center. The notice of lightering may be on the same form as the notice of arrival provided the form contains the information detailed in Long Island Sound Policy Letter (04/99): Lightering Notification (Enclosure (2)). A completed copy of the Notice of Offshore Lightering (Enclosure (3)) may be faxed to (203) 468-4443 to satisfy this requirement.
3. During all lightering operations the vessel's crew must be informed of any unique properties and/or special handling procedures for the specific type/brand of coal that is being handled (e.g. moisture content, critical temperatures, cooling procedures, etc.)
4. Clearly defined procedures must be established to help the crew deal with coal that is undergoing the process of slow oxidation (smoldering, spontaneous combustion). The procedures should identify critical temperatures and action points.
5. Instruction should be given to the crew to help them identify whether coal is emitting smoke or steam.
6. A record of cargo temperature readings, taken in accordance with the Bulk Carrier Code during the laden voyage, shall be maintained for each hold and presented to a Coast Guard Representative upon request.
7. Contingency plans to protect the crew, public safety, and the marine environment shall be established that outline the steps the crew and the company will take in the event an onboard fire (rapid oxidation) overwhelms the crew's ability to respond and resolve, at the berth and/or while lightering. The following is a list of items that should be considered and is by no means all inclusive:
 - a. Where can or will the ship go;
 - b. What equipment is available;
 - c. What is the expected response time for equipment to arrive on-scene;
 - d. What is expected from local municipal fire company;
 - e. What contractors will be used;
 - f. What tugs are available;
 - g. How long for company representative to arrive on-scene, etc?

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8. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) visas are required for all foreign nationals hired to work in the open hopper barge(s).
9. All individuals that board the open hopper barge(s) must report to the master of the tug/barge unit and are subject to the Office of Safety and Health Administration's regulations contained in Title 29 CFR Part 1918 Safety and Health Regulations For Longshoring.

If you have any questions please contact the Port Operations Section at (203) 468-4444.

Sincerely,

J. J. COCCIA
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port

Enclosures: (1) Long Island Sound Policy Letter (03/99): Lightering Zones
(2) Long Island Sound Policy Letter (04/99): Lightering Notification
(3) Notice Of Offshore Lightering